

# REFUGEE

Arizona Refugee Resettlement Journal

## resettlement

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June 2005

### 2005 CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

## SHARING AND NETWORKING CHANGES REFUGEES' LIVES AND ENRICHES OUR COMMUNITIES

Refugee resettlement professionals, educators, law enforcement personnel, refugees and volunteer service providers – 280 strong – came together at the Black Canyon Conference Center in Phoenix to share their knowledge, insights and experience and to learn from each other at the 2005 Arizona Refugee Resettlement Conference. The interest and excitement reinforced that community does matter; everyone has their part to play in refugee resettlement, their part to play in changing refugee lives and enriching our communities.

Charles Shipman, State Refugee Coordinator for the State of Arizona, set the Conference tone in his opening remarks. He reminded participants to celebrate the societal enrichment that refugees contribute to communities and that forming closer local and national partnerships can strengthen the core of successful refugee resettlement. Combining the strengths of government agencies, volunteers, businesses, community organizations and refugees builds stronger communities. He made a special point of the role refugees can play to influence policy and to provide

support for them and other humanitarian immigrants. He encouraged each attendee to make the most of the opportunity to network and to learn

### 2005 ARIZONA REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM CONFERENCE *Community Matters: Strengthening Refugee Resettlement in Arizona*

from each other, because community matters.

The 2005 Conference focused on four breakout session tracks: Advocacy, Education, Health and Trafficking. (See the synopsis of each track beginning on page 4.)

Opening session and luncheon speakers shared valuable information on Advocacy and Bringing Refugees to the Country, Global Perspectives on Refugee Health

Issues and an update from the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR).

The Opening General Session, Advocacy and Bringing Refugees to the Country, presented by Lavinia Limon, President and CEO, U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, provided a retrospective of refugee admissions to the U.S. Limon then outlined how the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks

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# A LETTER FROM THE STATE COORDINATOR

Dear Friends,

This issue of the Arizona Refugee Resettlement Journal highlights the events of the 2005 Arizona State Refugee Conference, Community Matters: Strengthening Refugee Resettlement in Arizona. The Conference focused on the importance of understanding and acting on the reality that successful refugee resettlement is rooted in the interests of, partnerships formed within, and solutions realized by local communities.

The Conference also served as an opportunity to celebrate the hallmark courage of refugees who, having escaped the horrors of war and persecution and the loss of homes and loved ones, are rebuilding their lives to become contributing and enriching members of our nation and state.

I want to thank the Conference planning committee for their dedication and hard work in pulling together a very successful conference, and our publishers, The Write Advantage, for donating full color for this edition. I also wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the many volunteers, businesses, and community organizations in Arizona who provide much needed support for refugees as they undertake the difficult, yet remarkable, transition to life in the United States.

Warmly,



Charles Shipman ■



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**ARIZONA REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM**  
**STATE COORDINATOR**  
**AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
Charles Shipman

**PUBLICATION PRODUCTION**  
The Write Advantage, Inc.  
(480) 941-8202  
e-mail: [vickie@write4biz.com](mailto:vickie@write4biz.com)

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Arizona Department of Economic Security  
Community Services Administration  
1789 W. Jefferson St., Site Code 086Z  
P.O. Box 6123, Phoenix, AZ 85005  
(602) 542-6600 • Fax: (602) 542-6400  
[www.de.state.az.us](http://www.de.state.az.us)

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# CONFERENCE OVERVIEW



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increased security concerns resulting in only 25,000 U.S. refugee admissions in 2002, the lowest in 25 years.

Diminished Congressional support for refugee resettlement exacerbated post 9/11 security concerns. Congressional awareness and commitment to refugee resettlement had gradually eroded over the past 20 years. Educating public officials and nurturing advocacy is critical. Former staunch supporters in Congress had retired and their replacements had not been cultivated as resettlement allies. She commented that we are slowly climbing back to the pre 9/11 refugee resettlement numbers, noting that "President Bush gets it about refugees; our issues are in good hands." She emphasized that refugees are "courageous risk takers, hard workers and dreamers," who give us our country back, share America's goals, and are our future.

Luncheon speaker Susan Purdin, Senior Technical Advisor, Reproductive Health, International Rescue Committee, shared her insights on Global Perspectives on Refugee Health Issues. Purdin stated that over 37 million people are displaced by war and armed conflict. Resulting health and social issues are violence against women, rape and HIV transmission. She outlined four primary areas of concern; curtailing gender-based violence, reducing HIV and sexually transmitted infections; promoting safe motherhood, and the ability to provide family planning. Purdin stressed that reproductive health is a basic right.

Dinner Monday evening featured a fashion show representing traditional dress from refugee homelands, music

and dance performed by Arizona Sudanese refugees, and a special awards ceremony.

Tuesday, the Conference day started early with a special Breakout Session that explored how to start a small business in America. Workshop attendees explored the monetary and time requirements of

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## RESOURCE CENTER EXHIBITS OPEN THROUGHOUT EVENT

From cancer awareness, trafficking and Voluntary Agencies to jewelry and other refugee handicrafts, the resource center was filled with opportunities for buying, browsing and educating. ■



*Luncheon Speaker  
Susan Purdin*

# CONFERENCE COVERS THREE KEY TRACKS

The two-day Conference provided two breakout sessions each day, with four tracks of varied interests available at each session. The following provides an overview of the four tracks available from which to choose: advocacy, education, health and trafficking.

## ADVOCACY TRACK

Four advocacy breakout sessions ranging from national policy to state and local issues supported and amplified the advocacy messages of the General Session address. The first focused on influencing federal governmental policy. Refugee protection strategies in the current political climate, and an overview of legislation being brought before the 109th Congress were included.

A Tucson multi-disciplinary panel described how an advisory committee can impact support system effectiveness, enhancing successful refugee resettlement. The advisory committee approach improves communication, reduces duplication and helps to identify needs-based services. Participants received guidelines for forming an advocacy committee.



*Attorney Janet Story spoke on "Guardianship for Adult Caregivers with Minors" in the Advocacy Track.*

Obtaining legal guardianship for refugee minors is a complicated but necessary process. The third advocacy session provided practical details for successful application. Participants received an application case study to use as a reference and guideline that shows what the Court expects to see on each of the required forms.

The warehousing breakout session painted a bleak picture of futility and wasted human potential for more than seven million of the world's 12 million refugees who are warehoused in refugee camps. The nine year average camp duration in 1993 has

stretched to 17 years in 2003. Although camp refugees are fed and lodged they see little in their future. Effectively, they are being denied basic human rights defined in the 1951 United Nations Convention

Relating to the Status of Refugees, including freedom of movement and the right to work. Describing warehousing as illegal and immoral, the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants is calling on donor and host countries to re-examine current policies and practices and to develop equitable, rights-friendly alternatives to warehousing.

## EDUCATION TRACK



*A highlight of the Education Track was a panel of high-school teachers who shared their experiences working with refugee students.*

Education sessions delved into the teaching challenges emerging from an increasing number of new immigrant and refugee students who have no prior schooling and no literacy skills in their first language. These students need basic survival skill vocabulary and literacy instruction before they can benefit from English as a Second Language curriculum.

The Information and Inclusion session shared video and printed materials developed to familiarize refugee parents with the American school system and to engage them in their children's education. "Refugees Students in High School: Striving to Meet the Challenge" featured a panel of teachers who shared their experiences helping refugee students handle the academic and social aspects of high school.

Education sessions also focused on ways schools and the community can promote heritage and community languages among refugees. Representatives from the Tucson Unified School District shared innovative programs and services they are using to educate their newest refugee students in basic English and academic math.



*Jana Mason of the International Rescue Committee spoke on "Marketing Your Good Works" in the Advocacy Track.*



## HEALTH TRACK

The Health sessions tackled the complexities and challenges of refugee healthcare. Conflicting Concepts in Medical Healing delved into the communication and cultural sensitivity gaps between medical providers and refugee patients. The session proposed the explanatory model to encourage patients to describe their understanding of the causes and effects of their illness and to work with the doctor to define an effective treatment plan.

Language barriers and cultural attitudes present specific challenges in medical treatment settings. Interpreting in Medical Settings described the role of the interpreter to accurately and objectively bridge the communication gap between patient and practitioner. It provided practical advice such as using a triangular seating pattern for patient, doctor and interpreter so that each can maintain eye contact with the others.

The preventive health session described community forums and community developed brochures addressing violence in New York's West African community, substance abuse in Vietnamese and Haitian communities, and domestic violence in the Bosnian and Albanian communities. Funded by a New York State grant, the project also resulted in a preventive health consortium serving refugees throughout New York City.

Participants in the Accessing SMI Services session learned how and when ValueOptions can provide severe mental illness services to Arizonans. ValueOptions responds in mental health crisis situations and provides long-term care.

## TRAFFICKING UPDATE

Discussions of human trafficking reiterated the distinction between smuggling and trafficking in that smuggling involves a voluntary agreement between the smuggler and the person relocating to another country. Trafficking inhibits the individual's ability to move about freely or to choose their own work through fear of violence, deportation, arrest, debt bondage and other psychological tactics. Smuggling is a crime against the state where trafficking is a crime against a person.

A session focused on the Rescue and Restore Program initiative to help those who may come in contact with trafficking victims to recognize clues that can help to identify victims. Another breakout described how child trafficking victims are often in plain view but unrecognized. Services and remediation available to child trafficking victims were also discussed.

High school senior Gavin Kachepa, shared his personal experience as a trafficking survivor. The promise of traveling to the U.S., the honor of performing in the Zambian boys choir, and the ability to earn money to help support his family back home seems like an exciting opportunity. Quickly the reality



*Nick Sensley, Cross-Sector Solutions, shared information on "Collaboratively Problem-Solving Trafficking of Persons."*

of their situation became clear. There were no wages from the grueling concert schedule, discipline was harsh, their passports were held by the choir organizers, and the fear of being sent home in disgrace was instilled in them.

Choir organizers attempted to frighten the boys by calling the police. Although the boys were afraid to tell the police the truth, the officers acted on their suspicions that something was wrong, resulting in investigations by INS and the Department of Labor. After nearly two years in the choir, the members were placed in foster care. Kachepa's advice is to "look beneath the surface and help people feel free to talk to you."

Collaboratively Solving Trafficking sessions defined a successful process to build a collaborative rapport between law enforcement, government agencies and community service providers to attack human trafficking. The resulting coalition helps responders identify victims and enables each constituency to better understand perspectives and authority of other agencies. It fosters personal relationships and contacts that translate into effective means to care for victims and to build cases against the perpetrators. ■

## A JOB WELL DONE

We wish to express our appreciation to the 2005 Planning Committee for their tireless efforts and outstanding results.

Melynda Barnhart, Arizona League to End Regional Trafficking (ALERT)

Mette Brogden, Jewish Family & Children's Services of Southern Arizona

Denise Cooney, Lutheran Social Ministry of the Southwest (LSMS)

Calla Floyd, Catholic Social Services of Phoenix (CSSP)

Gail Gibbons, Department of Economic Security

Lou Krafts, Association for Supportive Child Care

Linda McAllister, International Rescue Committee (IRC)

Frank Migali, Arizona Department of Education

Amra Sabanic, Tucson International Alliance of Refugee Communities

Charles Shipman, Arizona Refugee Resettlement Program

Hiba Tawfig, Association for Supportive Child Care

Bonnie Wood, Arizona Refugee Resettlement Program

## NETWORKING: IMPORTANT ASPECT OF 2005 CONFERENCE

As well as the opportunity to participate in educational breakouts and roundtables, the Conference allowed attendees to gather for networking throughout the event. Impromptu groups gathered between breakout sessions and over meals to share concerns of and insights into the refugee community. ■



## CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

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different types of businesses and assessed personality traits and motivation to manage a successful business.

Conference attendees welcomed Dr. Nguyen Van Hanh, PhD., Director, Office of Resettlement, to share an ORR Update and Key Points in Trafficking during Tuesday's luncheon. He defined the methodology of the Government Performance Results Act that measure the results of Federal programs. Concerning the ORR budget, he noted that no unspent funds remain from last year's budget.

He emphasized the importance of partnerships between federal agencies, state agencies, national and local Voluntary Agencies, Mutual Assistance Associations, and volunteer organizations to help refugees achieve economic self-sufficiency as soon as possible. He also described the Unaccompanied Alien Children and Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Programs.

A roundtable session afforded the opportunity for small groups to discuss issues specific to: Somalia, Cuba, Sudan, Burma, Liberia, HIV/Aids, Education and Employment. Following the lively group discussions, the results were presented to all participants.

Charles Shipman closed the Conference by thanking attendees, speakers and Conference planners for rewarding and productive discussions that are the impetus to move forward. He charged attendees to "go forth and do better." ■



*Luncheon Speaker,  
Dr. Nguyen Van Hanh, PhD.,  
Director, Office of Resettlement*



*Tuesday morning roundtables covered numerous topics including current challenges faced by refugees arriving in Arizona, best practices for assisting refugees arriving with HIV/AIDS and current trends in refugee employment.*



# TWO NEW AWARDS PRESENTED FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO REFUGEE PROGRAMS

**T**wo outstanding refugee advocates were recognized for their commitment and dedication with the first Arizona Refugee Resettlement Program Honors. The honorees were chosen through a nomination and selection process representing an array of people working with refugees throughout Arizona.

Arizona Refugee Resettlement Honors is awarded as a tribute to an Arizona refugee resettlement professional for "outstanding service to provide hope and opportunity to refugees fleeing persecution and tyranny." The 2005 honor was presented to Tri Huu Tran, former Arizona State Refugee Coordinator.



*Tri Huu Tran, receiving Arizona Refugee Resettlement Honors from Charles Shipman.*

Presenting the award to Tran, Charles Shipman outlined Tran's refugee journey from Vietnam, through Camp Pendleton to South Carolina. In spite of university degrees and a former teaching career, Tran began again his career in America with entry-level jobs, eventually progressing to State Refugee Coordinator for South Carolina where he was involved in the early formation of the United States Refugee Program.

After moving to Arizona, Tran served as the Arizona State Refugee Coordinator for 13 years. During his tenure he drew on his personal experience to pioneer innovative refugee assistance programs. He also fostered a network of refugee service providers that is the foundation for what has become one of our nation's most highly respected refugee resettlement programs.

The Arizona Refugee Champions Award was bestowed on Carolyn Manning. The purpose of the award is to "recognize outstanding humanitarian contributions to refugee resettlement in Arizona." The award serves to:

## CONGRATULATIONS TO

*Tri Huu Tran and Carolyn Manning*

- encourage the highest standards in serving refugees
- encourage performance in service to refugees
- enhance appreciation of refugee resettlement efforts and the opportunities and responsibilities they represent

Presenting the award to Manning, Shipman recounted her dedication and tireless efforts to support Arizona refugees. The death of her brother-in-law, Terrance Manning at Tower One of the World Trade Center September 11, 2001 caused Manning to empathize with others throughout the world that experience terrorism, war and oppression.

Manning and her husband Phil created the Welcome To America Project to bring a message of welcoming and belonging to Arizona refugees. Incorporated in November, 2001 the Project's mission is to build bridges of neighborly understanding between newly arrived refugees and families, and Phoenix community refugee volunteers.

Carolyn is a tireless advocate and supporter of Phoenix-area refugees. Rallying eighty-four volunteers, including their own five children, the Welcome To America Project collects, distributes and stores household furnishings, food and specific items requested by

resettlement agencies. The Project has also collected tens of thousands of dollars to provide financial support to refugees. Welcome To America Project volunteers also do community outreach, making home visits, helping refugees with finances, and providing transportation. ■

*Carolyn Manning receiving the Arizona Refugee Champions Award.*



# ENTERTAINMENT ADDS COLOR TO EVENT

While the daily events were more serious in nature, Monday evening's dinner was a colorful event highlighted with the Sudanese native dancers and a fashion show of colorful attire from refugee homelands.



Arizona Department of Economic Security  
Community Services Administration  
1789 W. Jefferson St.  
P.O. Box 6123, Site Code 086Z  
Phoenix, AZ 85005

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